With a view to enabling the Cabinet to inform itself fully of the position before discussing the character of the reply, the Secretary of the ^ar Gabinct was instructed to *War Cabinet* circulate to its Members the papers " prepared during the discussions of the late Government in connection with possible terms of Peace, conditions of an Armistice, and negotiations at the end of the War. Steps were also taken to ascertain the views of both Allies and Neutrals on the subject of the Note itself. It is interesting now to peruse the reports which came in. They indicate the reaction in each country, and the views and opinions formed at the time by belligerents and neutrals, as to the purport and bona fides of the German communication.

The French attitude was definitely suspicious of the Note. It was expressed by M. Briand in a speech in the Chamber on 13th December, 1916. *French* ii. d.d.cl that it was his bounden duty *attitude to* ± 7, , , . *Note* *-° P^ I<ttce on her guard against a peace which was really an attempt to split up the Allies. Surveying the situation he showed that, despite German successes in the past year, France, which had supported almost alone the terrible weight of the attack in 1914, had more reasons than ever for confidence in her conviction of the certitude of victory, Germany, in throwing out peace proposals, proclaimed at the same time her victory

; and in truth Serbia, Belgium and Roumania were at present invaded and the crime not yet expiated. Germany might declare that she did not want war. But she was the aggressor, and France, victorious at Verdun, would not walk into the trap of these peace proposals.

M. Jules Cambon thought the Allies should traverse